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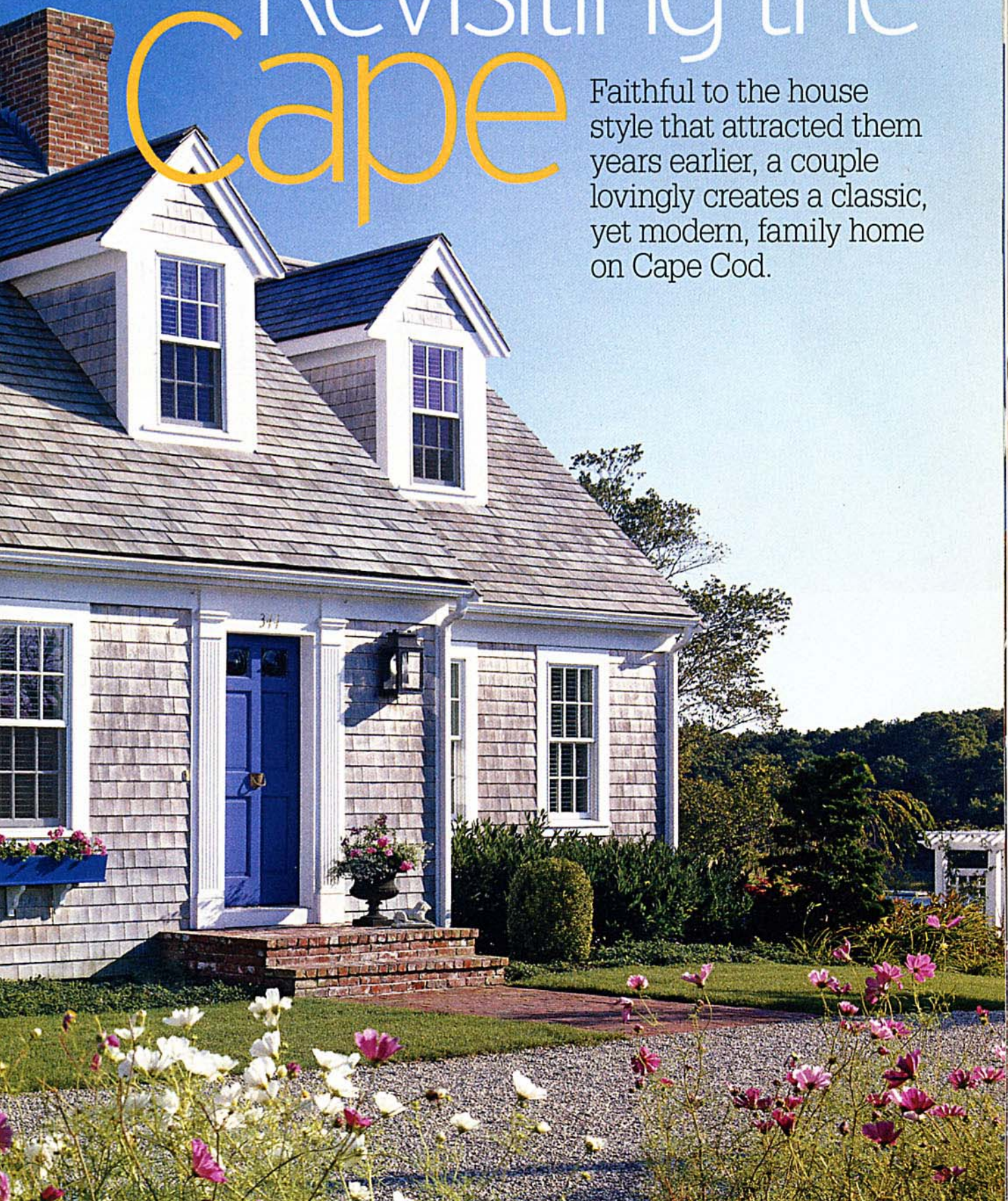
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This is a classic Cape Cod: familiar lines adorned with wood-shake siding and roofing, wide white window trim, front door pilasters, and a series of doghouse dormers.



Revisiting the Cape

Faithful to the house style that attracted them years earlier, a couple lovingly creates a classic, yet modern, family home on Cape Cod.





OPPOSITE | The feeling is decidedly Colonial in the front entry, owing to use of woodwork salvaged from the original home. Reclaimed pine flooring was used throughout the house.

LEFT | Nicks and nail holes are a testament to the history of the salvaged fireplace surround. The pine has been stripped and revarnished.

T

he diminutive shingle house seemed just right when Dean and Suzanne Hamilton spotted it 20 years ago in a historic and picturesque Cape Cod, Massachusetts, town. The seaside community also held fond memories for Suzanne, who spent many of her childhood summers there. So the couple purchased the charming little house that was so beautifully sited.

Dating from 1822, the house had been expanded willy-nilly through the years. It was initially adequate for the couple and their young children, but the long-term plan included an addition.

"We knew we wanted a home where our family would gather," Suzanne says. They sought permission from the local historical commission to add on but discovered that the house had been constructed on sandy soil. As the parable goes, a wise person would have built on rock.

With its architectural integrity already in question, the Hamiltons were devastated to learn that the house was infested with termites. The structure couldn't be saved.

Deciding to tear down the old house and build new was a painful choice. "Having lived in a lot of old homes, we appreciated its history and the materials that went into building it," Suzanne says. "We decided to salvage and reuse everything we could."

Cape Lore

As a summer destination, Cape Cod, Massachusetts, has drawn people to its coves, inlets, and irregular coastline for centuries. Cape Cod's classic home style was modeled after half-timbered homes abandoned by English colonists who came to North America in the late 17th century. Altered to suit stormy New England weather, the Cape Cod style emerged over the course of a few generations as the modest, dormered houses that we know today.

Why has this regional style proven so enduring? The low-profile Cape is unquestionably suited to "hunkering down" along the unforgiving New England coast. "It belongs here," architect Peter Polhemus says. "This is a house at home in our windswept landscape."







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Because guests will spend leisurely hours in dining rooms, this is a space that needs personality. Punch it up with handsome wallpapers, finely crafted corner cabinets, and elegant trim work all around.

The one thing the Hamiltons were most intent on preserving was the character of the sweet Cape Cod-style home that had attracted them initially. "We told our architects we wanted a home that looked like a traditional Cape in front, but was sprawling and filled with lots of light in back," Suzanne says. The new design would maintain a low profile from the street, while maximizing views and creating a contemporary feeling at the rear.

The result is a neatly landscaped, one-and-a-half story, dormered home covered in gray shakes. Classic six-over-six windows are trimmed in white; the modest front door and window boxes are painted a welcoming shade of periwinkle—a color scheme seen throughout.

The front feels and looks like reserved New England, but walk around the back or catch your

first look from the water, and it's a different dwelling. The materials are the same as those used in front, but a sea of windows and glazed French doors defines the waterfront side of the house. A broad bluestone patio anchors this elevation, with wide steps leading to the beach.

The couple invested interiors with a cozy warmth. They insisted that the entry have a low ceiling and serve as a showcase for the salvaged beams and mantel. Old wood used for the

ABOVE LEFT | White trim frames a quartet of transom-topped doors in the great-room.

ABOVE RIGHT | Serene color prevails in the casual room, punctuated with blue accents.

OPPOSITE | Step up from the relaxed great-room into the formal dining room, where wainscoting and blue-striped wallpaper create a backdrop for period furnishings, crystal, and ironstone tableware.







LEFT | Accessible from both the dining room and great-room, a bright, brick-floored sunroom offers yet another vantage point for taking in the water view. White wicker seating lends the space a casual, summery atmosphere.

To Save or to Raze

Making the decision to tear down or to save a historical house is never easy. Here are the recommendations of architect Peter Polhemus of Polhemus Savery DaSilva Architects Builders, who helped the Hamiltons make their decision.

Save a home if it has a solid foundation and:

- The character of a town is shaped by older structures, and yours is a defining example.
- The original house retains enough structural integrity that there really is something left to save.
- There's a personal attachment and a fervent desire to preserve and maintain the home.
- You can make the investment of money, time, and patience required for the project.

Raze it if the home was poorly constructed and:

- It has been remodeled to the point where it has no architectural integrity left.
- The only thing it has going for it is age. Just because it's old, that doesn't mean it's worth saving.
- Significant original materials are severely degraded and nothing similar is manufactured any longer.
- Critical elements, such as the roof and foundation, have failed and allowed significant water intrusion.





OPPOSITE | Suzanne describes her kitchen as "wonderful and contemporary," complete with a commercial-quality Viking range, black granite countertops, and a striking blue island.

ABOVE | Upper cabinets with glass doors on the front and back separate the kitchen from the great-room but don't block light or conversation.

ABOVE RIGHT | A trio of windows bumps out from the breakfast area, allowing a satisfying helping of sunshine to be part of the meal.

fireplace surround was stripped of fading paint and sealed with a colorless varnish that reveals the patina of the antique pine.

From the entry, visitors can see through to the great-room, out pairs of French doors along the back, across the porch, and beyond.

Every home should have a heart, and here it is the great-room, which includes the kitchen and a breakfast area. Suzanne calls this "the life area."

"It's my favorite place in the whole house," she says. It's always the place to be. During warm months, cool ocean breezes waft through the



French doors. When winter comes, it's time to button up, get a fire going in the fireplace, and watch the weather pass by outside.

Coffered ceilings and detailed wood trim give the great-room a slightly formal feel, as do Suzanne's collections of Staffordshire china. The furnishings are casual: White ruffled slipcovers create a beachy scene in summer, while denim and cranberry checks warm the room during the cold months. Accents spanning blue's most appealing shades tie everything together.

The space may be open and modern, but reminders of history are everywhere. The fireplace surround in the great-room was discovered at a tag sale, Suzanne says. "My daughter and I were at an old inn that was being renovated, and I saw the mantel in pieces on a table. I asked if it was for sale," she said. "The owner asked how much I'd be willing to pay and I said \$10. He replied, 'How about \$15?' I couldn't believe it. I bought it, brought it to a restorer, and found out it dated from the 1600s."

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Because kitchen islands float free, they offer an opportunity for introducing extra color or texture. A colorful island may contrast with other cabinets, and the countertop can have its own look, too.



OPPOSITE | Even the master bathroom is awash in pleasing shades of white, gray, and blue. A freestanding vanity continues the classic design themes from the rest of the home.

RIGHT | There's also room for modern and luxurious in the master bath. A spa-inspired shower, with twin rain showerheads, and a whirlpool tub perched next to tall windows afford bathers a soothing view.

Just around the corner from the great-room fireplace is the sunroom bump-out, offering the peaceful escape of an ocean view.

On the opposite end of the first level is a master suite that offers ocean views and much more. This retreat includes a spacious bath and room-size closet. There are four more bedrooms on the upper level.

Rich wood floors unify this rambling house. Although not original to the home that stood on the property, floorboards throughout the house were fashioned from wood salvaged by Reclamation Lumber of New Haven, Connecticut, which reclaims and remills wood from old barns, warehouses, and factories.

Recycled doors are used in dining room corner cupboards. Original kitchen cabinetry was also salvaged to outfit a potting shed.



"We wanted people, when they come in from the street, to see that we have honored the traditions of the past," Suzanne says. "I feel we've done that, and blended it with a livable, contemporary home. We feel we have the best of both worlds, and we know we are blessed." *

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About This Home

SQUARE FEET: 3,249

BEDROOMS: 5

BATHROOMS: 4 full,
2 half

FOOTPRINT: 50x110 feet

LOCATION: Cape Cod,
Massachusetts

- 1 Spacious entry.** The room-size entry with a fireplace isn't typical of Cape Cod style, but it was a feature seen in the original Colonials of the area.
- 2 Great for living.** Another Colonial idea is the great-room, which is one open room that encompasses the main living space, kitchen, and a spot for eating.
- 3 Separate quarters.** Because the master bedroom shares a wall with the kitchen, the suite needs isolation. A hall entrance creates the separation.
- 4 Close to the action.** The home's laundry is near the stairs on the upper level. This makes it convenient to the bedrooms on this level and a quick step up from the master suite below.

